

VZCZCXRO1224  
OO RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK  
DE RUEHMK #0400 1201357  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 301357Z APR 07  
FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6769  
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RHBVAKS/COMUSNAVCENT PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 000400

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/30/2017  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [BA](#) [IZ](#) [REGION](#)  
SUBJECT: BAHRAIN PROMOTES GCC+2 AS VEHICLE FOR IRAQ  
COOPERATION

Classified By: Ambassador William T. Monroe for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)  
.

¶1. (C) Foreign Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa told the Ambassador April 30 that there was a lingering feeling, mostly from Saudi Arabia, of mistrust of the Iraqi government. Although he did not know the exact reasons for Saudi Arabia refusing to host a visit of Iraqi PM Maliki, he believed it was due to a lack of trust. "We've heard Saudi Arabia say Maliki must do a lot more to curb terror, reach out to Sunnis, and control Shia militias," Shaikh Khalid reported. He noted that Saudi Foreign Minister Saud Al Faisal would be in Sharm Al Shaikh for the Compact and Neighbors meetings, and perhaps he and Maliki could talk at that time.

¶2. (C) The Ambassador urged Bahrain and the other GCC countries to do something positive that creates a climate of confidence and trust between the GCC and Iraq, which could empower Maliki to work more closely with Iraqi Sunnis. Shaikh Khalid replied that because of its demographics, Bahrain is a "special case" and has relations throughout Iraqi society, including with Shia hawzas. But it is not a powerful country and cannot take the lead. With specific regard to pledging support during the Compact portion of the upcoming meeting, Shaikh Khalid said that Bahrain "will do what we can to help" without identifying any specifics.

¶3. (C) Shaikh Khalid continued that the GCC 2 would be an appropriate forum in which to generate engagement between the Iraqi government and its Sunni Arab neighbors. During the meeting in Kuwait, there had been talk of inviting Iraqi Foreign Minister Zebari to a future session. This would allow the GCC 2 participants to discuss Iraq among themselves and then engage directly with Zebari "in a frank way." Bahrain would be willing to host this meeting, Shaikh Khalid said. The GCC 2 is an appropriate forum to discuss Iraq because that country's stability is a vital interest for all participants. If Iraq continues to be a war zone, with score-settling and logistical and human support from outside, it will continue to be a problem. Its borders must be made secure.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Visit Embassy Manama's Classified Website:  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/manama/>  
\*\*\*\*\*  
MONROE